# Guidelines for Conducting a Master Thesis

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The master thesis is a major part of your curriculum and requires quite some effort for a successful completion. During your thesis work you should improve your scientific skills (under guidance of your advisor) and adhere to professional work habit. These guidelines should help you to make your thesis a success.

We advise you to the **Code of Conduct** of the Alpen-Adria-Universität-Klagenfurt to ensure good academic practice (cp. https://www.aau.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Code-of-Conduct-in-deutscher-Sprache.pdf or https://www.aau.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Code-of-Conduct-in-englischer-Sprache.pdf).

## Main steps of your master thesis

1. **Perform a self-evaluation of your programming skills and knowledge**
   Consult members of the institute's research group where you want to conduct your thesis work. They assist you to identify your strengths and weaknesses.

2. **Discuss your topic with your advisor** and derive a project plan for your work within the first two weeks. This plan has to include milestones for your project development and required resources (hardware, software etc.)

3. **Submit your application for supervision of your thesis online**
   In the Campus system, go to My Applications › Submit New Application.

4. **Use the NES repository for regularly archiving code and documentation**
   Your advisor will provide access to our repository

5. **Participate actively in individual meetings with your advisor and group meetings**
   If you can not participate you are required to send a mail to your advisor prior to the meeting.

6. **Document the status and achieved progress** in your (written) progress report on a weekly basis. Check the modalities of these progress reports with your advisor.

7. **Hold your mid-term presentation** in a group meeting. Focus this presentation on your problem description, the state of the art and the potential approaches to solve the problem. Your advisor will schedule the mid-term presentation. Prepare a 20-minutes talk and discuss your presentation slides with your advisor prior to the scheduled date.

8. **Plan the organization** of the thesis report (master thesis) early. Discuss the outline with your advisor and start writing. Don't wait until the end of your thesis work.

9. **Complete writing of a single chapter** (e.g., the related work). Your advisor will give you feedback on this "test chapter". Implement the feedback for the writing the remaining parts.

10. **Complete the thesis report** and carefully proof-read it. Submit the report to your advisor. Your advisor will probably make corrections and suggest some improvements. However, note that the quality of your submitted version will have a great influence on the final grade.

11. **Hold your end-term presentation** in a group meeting. Focus this presentation on your chosen approach, the implementation and the evaluation. Your advisor will schedule the end-term presentation. Your documentation should be completed at the end-term presentation. Prepare a 20-minutes talk and discuss your presentation slides with your advisor prior to the scheduled date.

12. **Submit your final thesis to the Studienrektorat** only if your advisor has granted the permission to do so. Follow the instructions at https://www.aau.at/en/study/studying-at-aau/completing/master-and-diploma-theses/

13. **Provide a complete copy** of the thesis report as well as all code and data to your advisor. Return all AAU equipment and books.

## Some useful hints for conducting your thesis work

- Adhere to our formatting guidelines. We advise to use LaTeX and the provided template for writing your thesis.

- There is no strict rule about the length of the thesis document, but the main text of a typical master thesis has about 70 pages.

- A typical master thesis requires 6 to 8 months (full time). Note that the mentoring period for a master thesis is limited for 2 years (guideline of the Study Rector).

## Assessment criteria

Your thesis work will be graded based on the following criteria:

1. **Master thesis document**
   - Content, structure and style of your written work

2. **Quality of the achieved results**
   - Chosen approaches for the research topic
   - Own contributions, implemented methods
   - Achieved results
   - Contribution to a scientific publication

3. **Presentation**
   - Style and clarity of the scientific communication in the group meetings
   - Mid-term and final presentations

4. **Independence and initiative**
   - Developing of own ideas, methods and approaches
   - Taking care of preparations, implementation and evaluations (experiments)

5. **Organization of work**
   - Time management and professional behavior
   - Active participation in group meetings
   - Documentation of work in the EduWiki